

# VETERANS AFFAIRS GREATER LOS ANGELES HEALTHCARE SYSTEM



**Steven R. Simon, M.D., M.P.H.**  
*Chief of Staff*

March 12, 2020

Dear Veteran,

As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation continues to evolve in our community and across the country, **VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System** is taking additional steps to limit the spread of this virus and other respiratory illnesses.

We have implemented enhanced screening protocols at the entry to all our facilities. This includes the VA Medical Center in West Los Angeles and all VA Outpatient Clinic buildings throughout our system. We understand this may be an inconvenience, but it is important that we quickly identify individuals who have symptoms and direct them for appropriate triage and treatment.

Screeners at all entrances will ask you:

1. In the past 14 days, have you traveled from China, Iran, Italy, Japan, or South Korea?
2. In the past 14 days, have you had direct contact with a person with laboratory-confirmed Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19)?
3. Do you currently have fever with cough or shortness of breath?

**A Veteran who answers YES to any of the above questions will be given a mask to wear and referred to a designated screening area for evaluation by a nurse or physician.**

**Employees and non-Veteran visitors** may NOT enter the hospital or clinic building if ANY of the answers to the above screening questions are YES.

All Veterans who have any infectious symptoms or exposure concerns should call the GLA Call Center at **1-877-252-4866** for phone triage and instruction **BEFORE** coming to the medical center or a clinic. They will give you advice or send a message to your provider to call you back. **Secure Messaging** through [www.myhealth.va.gov](https://www.myhealth.va.gov) is also a useful tool to contact your provider. We have asked primary care teams to respond to messages within 1 business day.

Instead of an in-person clinic visit, your primary care provider and PACT team members can interact with you over the telephone or set up a VA Video Connect (VVC), which is like Skype or FaceTime. This will allow you to talk and see your provider from the comfort and safety of your own home. To set up a VVC or phone visit, contact your primary care team through secure

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messaging or the Call Center. If you have an upcoming face-to-face appointment, your care team will contact you to offer you options for care.

The safest place for you is at home, unless you require hospitalization.

Other ways you can help protect yourselves, your family and our communities:

- **If you or immediate family members (living in your household) are sick – stay home!**
- **Practice proper hand washing hygiene.** Clean your hands with soap and water (preferred) for at least 20 seconds or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.**
- **Clean hard surfaces frequently.** Routinely clean surfaces you come in contact with, such as workstations, countertops, and doorknobs. Use cleaning agents that are usually used in these areas and follow the directions on the label. No special cleaning is necessary for COVID-19.

These policies and guidelines may change at any time as the situation evolves. We appreciate your flexibility. Updated information on COVID-19 can be found on the CDC website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> . We thank all of you for your patience and understanding as we work to keep our Veterans, staff and communities safe and healthy.

Sincerely,



Steven R. Simon, MD, MPH

Chief of Staff

VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System